



John B. "Jack" Keetley, for whom the community of Keetley was named.

the years of construction of the Ontario-Daly Drain Tunnel remember "Jack" Keetley for his kindness to them as they romped over the hills under which his men were digging. Years later, George A. Fisher, prominent cattleman and land developer, named the community which developed in the valley below the mining project, Keetley, in honor of his "childhood hero."

The Keetley area was first prospected around 1875 and 1876. When David Keith and Thomas Kearns were prospecting in the mountains that produced the great mines of Park City, their fellow prospector, David Fisher, turned south and laid claim to the "Columbus," a tract which



George A. Fisher, who named the town of Keetley, and was its mayor.

was later incorporated with other holdings to form the "Star of Utah," which in turn became the New Park Mine.

The first major effort to produce ore in Wasatch County was the McCune Tunnel. This was driven into the mountains west of Keetley before the turn of the century, but to no avail. About the same time the McHenry Shaft was sunk in the same area, but the unfortunate prospectors, it was later discovered, missed a vast vein of ore by only 18 feet.

Another mining adventure, The St. Louis-Ontario, was conducted directly above the spot where the portal of the drain tunnel was later placed. This project also failed, perhaps because it was focused too high on the Blue Ledge slope.

In spite of these failures, the lure of gold and other precious metals enchanted many and prospecting continued. In the early 1900's the East Utah shaft was sunk, and modest fortunes sank with it. In 1905 the Columbus Tract on Bonanza Flat was worked until lack of capital ended the venture.

Further down the slope in the Glen Allen, sometimes known as the "Glencoe" excavation, hundreds of thousands of dollars were invested in determined efforts to locate pay dirt. A refining mill was constructed on the property through which discovered ore was reduced to concentrate. In 1907 John Fisher and Gail Fisher took a contract to transport this refined ore from the mill to the Denver and Rio Grande Depot in Heber City, a distance of about 12 miles. However, the Allen fortune was spent before the coveted silver vein was located.

The project "Vallejo" lay further south in the mountains west of Jordanelle, and was worked intermittently for several years, even though a heavy percentage of iron in the ore made transportation a serious problem.

William Trevithick and John Fisher leased the Vallejo property and supplied work for many Wasatch County miners and teamsters until this venture too ended in disaster. George McDonald, one of the teamsters, was headed toward Heber City with a wagon load of ore and when he drove onto the Provo River bridge northwest of the present Heber Light and Power plant, the bridge buckled, sending him and half his wagon one way and the team and the rest of the wagon and ore the other way. Mr. McDonald escaped alive, but the wagon and team were lost, and the bridge was gone. Because the ore from Vallejo could not command sufficient price to warrant construction of a new bridge and better road, the project failed.

Another persistent attempt at prospecting for ore in northern Wasatch County was the Nelson-Green, which was located in rolling hills some two miles east of Lee's Ranch. After several years of effort, the Nelson Brothers of Park City sold the property to Daniel Knold, who renamed it the Park Knold, and continued to work his claim with some profit.

The major mining development in the Keetley area began about 1921 when the Park Utah Mining Company was formed. The company con-



According to John Crook's journal, those who spent the winter of 1860-61 in the fort with their families were:

North Side: John Carlile, John Crook, Thomas Rasband, James Carlile, Fred Giles, Robert S. Duke, Willis Boren, James Davis, Robert Broadhead, Hyrum Oaks, Alfred Johnson, Sam Rooker, William Dameron, James Lamon and John Lee.

East Side: Alex Sessions, Richard Jones, Elisha Thomas, Bradford Sessions, Isaac Cummings, Darwin Walton, John Cummings Sr., Charles N. Carroll, George Dameron, Bailes Sprouse, Thomas Hicken, George Thompson and Norton Jacobs.

South Side: Thomas Moulton, Patrick Carroll, William Forman, John Muir, John M. Murdock, Thomas Todd, Cal Henry and Robert Carlile.

West Side: Jane Clotworthy, Zemira Palmer, James Duke, James Laird, Cub Johnson, John Davis, Robert Parker, Terry Burns, William McDonald, John Hamilton, George W. Clyde, John Witt, Joseph S. McDonald, John Jordan, a Mr. Russell and John McDonald.

By the time Spring was welcomed in 1861 the community of Heber was recognized by Church leaders in Salt Lake City as being large enough to organize into a ward. Thus, early in 1861 Joseph S. Murdock was ordained as bishop of the new ward by President Brigham Young and sent from American Fork to Heber to take charge of Church affairs. He chose as his counselors John W. Witt and Thomas Rasband. John Hamilton served as ward clerk.

Bishop Murdock also served as presiding bishop of the valley and directed the Church efforts of presiding elders who were called in the small communities that had begun to spring up in the valley. These community developments are discussed separately in later chapters.

The year 1861 proved to be a year of many significant accomplishments. With Church activity on an organized basis and the individual homes as well fixed as possible for that time, the settlers began to look to community improvements.

Provisions were made for old and new settlers to plant vegetable gardens outside the fort. Ephraim Smith and William P. Reynolds built a chopper run by horse power to chop wheat for those who could not go to the mills in Provo. While it was still somewhat crude, the chopper was a great help to those who had been grinding their flour in small hand mills.

Another bridge was built over the Provo River, this one located six miles north of Heber on the road to Salt Lake City. A good wagon road was also made through Provo Canyon, with toll being charged for use of the road.

John M. Murdock organized a cooperative sheep herd in 1860 and cared for the sheep during the summer months himself. He was able to take the sheep far enough south to winter out so that they did not need special supplies of hay. This method of caring for the sheep enabled

2nd Bridge at Jordanelle  
HBUM pp 15 1861



So. Abutment of Old Jordanelle Bridge



No. Abutment



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